Eng. Poetry vol 44.

THE EAST INDIA CULPRITS.

A POEM.

IN IMITATION OF

SWIFT's "LEGION CLUB."

(By an Officer, who was present at the BATTLE of PLASSEY.)

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MDCCLXXIII.

THE

EAST INDIA CULPRITS, &c.

WHAT can mean this mighty noiſe,
Echo'd by the general voice;
Thence re-echo'd by the nation,
Of Eaſt-India peculation?
Scarce a daily Gazetteer
But recoils it on my ear;
Scarce a face that meets my eye,
But confirms it with a ſigh;
Yet with all this mighty gabble,
Spok'n of by the great, and rabble

Ev'ry *Culprit* ſleeps in quiet,
Heedleſs of the Public riot.

Satire, if thoul't be obedient,
Surely thou haſt ſome expedient!
How to ferret out this crew
To the injur'd public's view;
Apropos! ſuppoſe we call
In our walks to *Leadenhall*,*
Time, and place are in thy pow'r,
There we'll ſit for half an hour;
As a member you'll conduct me,
I ſhall aſk, do thou inſtruct me.

Take their features then, ſays ſatire,
I will be thy nomenclator.
Juſtice is my common care,
'Tis her wiſh I ſhould not ſpare.

* The Eaſt-India Houſe, Leadenhall-ſtreet.

Who

Who has that ill-natur'd goal-look?
Is it Satan? No—'tis C—ke.
How can you be ſo uncivil
Thus to vilify the Devil?
Though his hoof, and horns deſcribe him,
Certainly you now muſt gibe him;
For with all his helliſh tricks,
(Here, or t'other ſide of Styx,)
Satan is not ſo opprobrious,
All compariſons are odious.
Could his ſcurvy mind all tainted,
Bear his vices to be painted,
What a liſt could I produce
Such as Hell had ne'er in uſe;
Now combining in monop'lies,
Now retailing ſcraps of lott'ries,
Now giving India ſtock a flux,
Now ſhooting at Change-Alley ducks,

Now prowling without ſhame, or dread,
On the widows—orphans bread,
Betraying, with intent direct,
Ev'ry right he ſhould protect.

Next in pow'r, † as next in favour,
(Ev'ry th—f has his receiver)
See, where S—l—n appears,
Grey in office, as in years.
Mark how graciouſly he bows,
To pledge whate'er his *chief* avows!
Should the latter broach a *lye*
Of the damn'ſt, deepeſt die,
Though he knew, *in half a year*
Ev'ry proof would thick appear,
Yet, *with eyes up to the roof*,
The readier to confirm the proof,
And *his hand upon his breaſt*,
He would conſecrate the teſt.

† Mr. S—l—n, was Deputy Chairman at this time.

Pious

Pious chairman! void of rage,
Thus to ſmooth the bed of age,
Give up honour, truth, and reaſon,
Upon ev'ry prompt occaſion;
And for love of ſuch a friend,
Proſtitute thy latter end:
Surely this is chriſtian charity,
Thus to hang together in am'ty!

Satire ſmoke that Buckram fool
Whoſe ev'ry motion's made by rule,
Whoſe *leaden* eye, and *dewlap'd* jowl
Mark the vacuum of his ſoul!
Who is he? 'Tis Pompous C—b—n,
With whom no virtue e'er did ſojourn;
On whom no ſprightly, ſocial hour
Ever ſhed its kindred pow'r;
Leagu'd in ſchemes as foul as ſtorms,
C—b—ke *plans*, and he *performs*;

Which, as partners, they unite
To give the world a mutual bite.
Thus oft two vagabonds conſpire
To aid the mis'ries of a fire,
The one at diſtance marks the prey,
Whilſt t'other ſnatches it away;
Yet both next hour divide the ſpoils,
The purchaſe of their ruffian toils.

Bleſs us P---g! Art thou there man?
Who d'ye mean? Why former chairman, ‡
Chairman to that damn'd committee,
Who ſans dread, or ſhame, or pity,
Swore (like Jugglers o'er their tricks)
That every *two* and *two* made *ſix*;

‡ Mr. P. was Ch——n in the year 1771, when he declared the Company could divide 12½ per cent. though the acceptance they were under, at the ſame time, of bills from Bengal, and other matters, reduced them in leſs than a year to lower their dividend to 6 per cent. and apply to Government for a loan of 1,500,000l. which in all probability will be the ruin of the Company.

That

That *calculations* all were vain,
The produce of a *madman's brain*;
That Plenty with her cup run o'er
In heaps of *goods*, and heaps of *ore*;
That the *Duannee Revenues*,
Were a countleſs pile of guineas;
Which nor preſent wants, nor plunder
Could for ages yet get under.
Yet behold this golden ſcheme,
Vaniſh'd like a morning dream,
Raſcals fatten'd on the fall
Whilſt the widow loſt her all.
Deluded man! ambitious P----g,
Where haſt thou a hole to turn in?
What avails thy late pretence
To diſcretion, or good ſenſe?
What that Commerce was thy mother,
Will it depredation ſmother?

When

When, like an ungrateful varlet,
You thus treat her like a harlot:
Treat thyſelf too leſs than man,
By pimping for a gambling clan.
Can thy ſeat within St. Stephen §
Think'ſt thou, make all matters even?
Will it ſtop the voice of right
Crying with a giant's might?
Will it huſh the orphan's moan,
Or recover him his loan?
Will it ſoothe the pangs of conſcience
On a late death-bed repentance?

Come, ſays ſatire, we'll retire,
Here you've ſeen what you deſire;
If you need would know the reſt,
I muſt take you to the Weſt;

§ A miniſterial borough he was complimented with about this time.

To a more important ſtation,
The great council of the nation;
Yet where heedleſs of the place,
Ev'ry raſcal ſhews his face,
Fearleſs of, or ſhame, or his guilt,
As a drover would at Smithfield.

Surely ſatire, in a flurry,
You've run o'er things hurry, ſcurry!
Don't you ſee what num'rous ſcores,
Still remain within theſe doors;
Why I've ſcarcely ſeen a ſample,
Not enough for an example?
Hang them paltry, pimping tools,*
Form'd of cautious knaves, and fools;
Kept like hounds, as ſeaſons ſuit,
To yelp at honour, juſtice, truth,

* The author here only ſpeaks of the late *majorities*, there being many honourable exceptions to this character, both inſide and outſide the bar.

Whipp'd in by I---p---y, S---th, or H---ges,
(Who's e'er the venal, dirty job is)
Faſten'd in Corruption's tether,
Let them *creep* and *vote* together;
They're too low for me to gibe 'em,
Not a manly vice deſcribes 'em.

Now plac'd beneath St. Stephen's roof,
(By help of Pegaſus his hoof)
Satire here, though in *perdue*,
Re-aſſum'd her uſual cue.

Near yon ſpiral pillar plac'd,
By his vulgar viſage trac'd,
Where *rage* and *av'rice* jointly ſtrive,
Sits the Nabob plund'ring C—ve, †
In *Jaghires* to his countleſs ſtore,
See Aſia's golden tide runs o'er!

† Though this noble Lord, as well as the ſubſequent character, were not apparently concerned in the *immediate* misfortunes of the Company, yet their *former unaccounted peculations* juſtly entitle them to rank as "East-India Culprits."

Whilſt

Whilſt gracious G—— for all his pains
In knocking out poor Indians brains,
Juſtly gives the bluſhing meed *
Memorial of each bloody deed.

Prythee, Satire, keep him further,
Still his ranc'rous looks breathe murder;
Sure with ſuch a ſcowling yawn,
'Twas he butcher'd *Alli Cawn.*
But hark! He's up in his defence
Patience honour! juſtice! ſenſe!
When with ſuch a *heart* and *brains,*
He durſt enter ~~my~~ your domains;
When with ſuch a brazen front,
He durſt ever think upon 't;
Yet behold! What damn'd abuſes,
Gold, all pow'rful gold produces!
Though the pettifogging thief,
Pilf'ring for the day's relief

* Red ribband.

In

In terror earns his ſcanty board,
And ends his mis'ry by a cord,
C----ve, by boldly *ſtealing more*,
Safely revels in his ſtore.

Meditating on this thought
" How protection could be bought!"
And th' effects of peculation,
On this much inſulted nation,
Straight the cry of *honour* rung
From a diſtant member's tongue
" Who is 't."---paſs'd along the gall'ry
Lo! S---ke's appear'd! and all was *raillery* †

Worthy offspring of a barber,
Squeez'd 'twixt powder-puffs, and lather!
Has this *honour* virtue's ſeal?
Or is 't the ſpecies which you feel?

† When Mr. S——, was charged with the embezzlement of the *motut* duties in the Houſe of Commons, he talked loudly of his *honour*, which was look'd upon as ſo vague a defence from *him* that the Houſe inſtantly ſet up a loud laugh.

Was

Was it *honour* made thee roam
From thy miſerable home?
Was it *honour* made thee rob
Firſt in every wicked job;
No matter what, for all would ſuit,
Whether *beetel*, or *mottut*?
Was it *honour* made thee fly
From thy proper deſtiny,
When the Indians, up in ſtrife,
Had determin'd on thy life?
Or was't *honour* brought thee here,
Thus to huff, and domineer?
Hence then vagrant, ceaſe thy brawling,
Re-aſſume thy father's calling;
Sculk within thy native ſhed,
Earn for *once* ſome *honeſt bread*;
Nor ſuppoſe your late vocation,
E'er will militate this ſtation;

(Truſt me here I'm not thy foe Sir)
Hence you'll learn to *trim* the cloſer.

Here, ſays Satire, I deſiſt
Now you've ſeen the odious liſt:
Who, without, or dread, or ſhame,
Realiz'd the *South Sea ſcheme*;
Taking, in the general hawl,
WIDOWS, ORPHANS, PAUPERS all.

Come then, equal-blooded JUSTICE!
In whoſe hands the public truſt is!
Come, with all thy truth and might,
Do the injur'd public right;
For thine own ſake, well as Pity's
Cruſh the ſpecious *two Committees*;
Webs of *miniſterial* make,
To let a brother thief eſcape,
Here the knaves are in a pack,
Squeeze them out of ev'ry *lack*;

Hunt them, on this juſt occaſion,
Through each doubling, each evaſion:
And when ſtript of ev'ry farthing,
Naked as their deeds deſerving,
Give them to the world in ſamples,
Not as *patterns*—but *examples*.

F I N I S.

THE END